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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

DEDICATED

To the Sovereign People of the United States.

NO. 1.

The Government of the People.

WILLIAM MACKEY,
EDITOR.

Knowledge is Power, and Political Knowledge is the Chief of Powers.

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THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE.

That the government of the United States is "a government of the people, by the people, and for the people," is a very frequent announcement, and is always received with applause. It must be in the interest of the people to ascertain whether the fact thus announced be so or not; and should it appear that the sovereignty of the people is more in name, than in fact, and that the sovereignty rightfully belongs to the people, then to ascertain, if possible, why the sovereignty is not as efficacious of good for the people as might be reasonably expected.

The points then to be considered are simply three :

1. Are the people entitled to govern ?
2. Do they govern ?
3. If not, why not ?

We might have been content with the ready acceptance which the announcement of the government of the people has ever met with in this country, and furthermore, with the apparently conclusive authority of the Preamble to that Constitution which, with the laws enacted by Congress under it, forms the supreme law of this Republic. That Preamble should be well understood by the people, and it is as follows :

We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and to our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

This Preamble should be well studied by all who desire to become acquainted with the nature of the government of the United States, as it exhibits in a few lines not merely the special purposes of that government, but also the avowed objects of all government of every form. The first object proposed in the Preamble is the formation of "a more perfect union ; and fittingly, because the splendid justice on which that union was based, would be, if faithfully adhered to, the best guarantee of the five other objects contemplated, namely : justice generally, domestic tranquility, security from invasion, the general welfare, and an enduring liberty.

THE CONSTITUTION THE PEOPLE'S WORK.

Thus, then, the government constituted for the above high and holy purposes was solemnly declared in the Preamble of the Constitution to be the work of the people. This should be understood to be strictly correct. The wise and able men that spent four months and three days in discussing and determining upon the provisions of the Constitution had been delegated for that special purpose by the people of the several States of the then Union, and it is a fundamental rule in law and human affairs, that "what men do by others they do by themselves." That is, that it is really their act, and they are responsible, and entitled to credit for the act, and that in this case, the production of the delegates was the people's act, more especially, as the Constitution was finally submitted to the people and received their ratification. The Constitution thus framed was no simple or commonplace document. A mighty work had to be accomplished, and even with previous experience in the line, it took all the time and attention of the very able delegates to elaborate and complete that Constitution. Their efforts have been ever regarded as a triumphant success, and the Constitution has been pronounced by competent authority to be the greatest effort of human wisdom.

It is well to see how this is. The Union was not formed by the Constitution. It was only made "more perfect" by the working of that instrument. It first became a fact in the war of the Revolution, and was formally inaugurated in the Articles of Confederation, A. D. 1778. By the Articles it was agreed that the Union should be perpetual. The ratification of that Union is worthy of repetition as well for its form as substance, namely :

"And whereas, it hath pleased the great Governor of the world to incline the hearts of the Legislatures, we respectively represent in Congress to approve of, and to authorize us to ratify the said articles of Confederation and perpetual Union." And then the delegates fully ratified the articles of Confederation and perpetual Union, and pledged the faith of their respective States, that amongst other things, "the Union should be perpetual."

GOD IN THE CONSTITUTION.

The Union thus formed is that which subsists to-day, made "more perfect," or, to use the words of the letter signed by George Washington presenting to Congress the Constitution when completed by the Convention, "consolidated" by their labors. The Union so "consolidated" was attributed, in its origin, to an inspiration of the Deity, and as its increased perfection was the great purpose of the Constitution, it follows that a recognition of the favors thus conferred on this Republic is the very basis of the Constitution. If the pious people who have so frequently appealed to Congress on this subject, would only take the trouble to enquire what Union it was that was by the Constitution to be made "more perfect" and "consolidated," they would find it to be the then existent Union declared in its formation to be made at the Divine impulse. No other Union is

mentioned in the Constitution, and the proposed improvement or consolidation was to be effected not by extending its duration, for it was to be "perpetual," but by strengthening and enlarging the powers of the Federal Government. We thus endeavor, by research and reference, to put "God in the Constitution," in vindication of the founders of the Republic and of the work of the people. Going still further back, we meet with additional warrant for this view. The Declaration of Independence, the promulgation of which is celebrated this Centennial year, and which, as it ushered the Republic into existence, must be ever regarded as the foundation of the Constitution, has no less than four recognitions of the Deity. Thus, in the introduction it asserts the right of the people to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitled them. The next paragraph proceeds, "We hold those truths are self-evident that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness;" and in the final paragraph, where the formal Declaration of Independence is made, they, as representatives of the United States in Congress assembled, appeal to the Supreme Judge of the world, for the rectitude of their intentions, and, finally, for support of the Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, they mutually pledge to each other their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor. In truth, the three documents, to which we have referred, form the true Constitution of the United States, and no one can have a complete view of that, one of the most important facts in history, without taking the three in connection. They may be said to form the title deeds of the Republic.

THE UNION IS PEACE.

We may venture, too, to add, that there is considerable ground for believing that it was no rash presumption on the part of the founders of the Republic to believe that in the formation of the Union they were proceeding under Divine auspices, inasmuch as in the consolidation of that Union, they were led to the greatest and most beneficent discovery in political science. That was the combination of a Federal Government, furnished with ample powers and full control over the resources of the country for defensive purposes, with the self-government of the several States, in full security from all extraneous interference from any quarter. Under a provision of the Constitution each State is forbidden to wage war on any other State, or even against a foreign foe, unless invaded.. This alone is a powerful guarantee for peace, internal and external, and may be hoped to be viewed with a favorable eye by the "Prince of Peace."

It is, however, a remarkable circumstance, that though men have chosen to be ruled by Kings, yet, that even in monarchies it is frequently assumed by those in authority, especially in perilous undertakings, that they are acting at the instance, or with the authority of the people.

Louis Napoleon having been crushed in his rash enterprise against the Prussian Monarch, sought to palliate, if not justify his rashness by the cries of the Parisian mob. When the Sultan of Turkey was lately deposed, the midnight conspirators claimed that the dethronement was the act of the people. In England they speak familiarly of the people being the true source of all legitimate power, and of the Monarch being "the first servant of the people," yet the bulk of the people are so devoid of power, that the men by the sweat of whose brows the crops of England are universally raised, have, to use a phrase of Macaulay's, no more influence on the course of legislation in England, than the swine in the sty.

The course of human experience being, that, whether willingly or unwillingly, the people, the mass of the population, have been very generally excluded from any direct influence on government, and it being, on the other hand, in this Republic, the legal right of the people to control the government, it becomes proper to see whether this power in the mass of the people be, or not, inconsistent with the rights as well as the interests of what may be called the superior classes of the people, the wealthier, the more highly educated.

Upon this important inquiry it is very satisfactory to be able to arrive at the conclusion that the award of power, under the Constitution to the mass of the people, is perfectly consistent with the rights and interests of all the people. What, it may be asked, is the reason for this conclusion? It is, that of all classes in the community, it is more especially the interest of the humbler classes to secure good and prudent government, and that for the want of such government, they will be the principal sufferers.

The rich, those having abundant means, though they may have to sustain losses, are yet seured against the extremity of want. There is little likelihood of their being subject to the winter's cold, or the torrents of rain, unprotected. It is not of them that Lear, in his agony, would say,

"Poor, naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and windowed raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these?"

The genius of Shakspeare framed this interrogatory, but attempted no solution of the difficulty. He merely made appeal in another quarter, thus :

"Take physic pomp,
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayest shake the superflux to them,
And show the heavens more just."

What Shakspeare wrote of was a convulsion of nature; but hurricanes that arise from political causes may be as baleful visitations to humanity as could be any natural. And surely it is the duty of the community, and

especially the portion of it that is possessed of power, to guard against tornadoes whether natural or political. The people fortunately have ample power in this Republic, if they choose to use it, to protect themselves, or, as we have shown, the great bulk of them must be the chief sufferers. The interest, the motive to ward off those political mischiefs, is, then, precisely with the people that have the power.

THE PEOPLE ARMED WITH POWER OF SELF-PROTECTION, YET SUFFER.

Now, this is a point that merits ample consideration. It is a grand feature in the Constitution of this Republic, that those most liable to political calamities are under it armed with powers of self-protection. Surely one would say, a community so circumstanced must be ever safe and prosperous. The instinct of self-preservation affords abundant guarantee for that.

HARD TIMES—THE WAR—THE CURRENCY.

Let us test this by facts. The people of this country are now suffering much distress. The industry of the country is paralyzed, and thousands of stalwart men may be said to lack bread. What is the cause, it may be asked, of this distressing state of affairs?—no one will venture to say that the cause is natural. It is not plagues or pestilences, or short harvests or excessive population that have caused the distress. It must be admitted that the remote cause of the mischief was the war that for five successive years spread destruction and desolation throughout the land, and finally left the people weighed down with a load of debt of unprecedented dimensions, such as was never before incurred by any people or nation within a period of ten, aye, twenty times the duration. The losses of property and destruction of valuable life in the war, together with taxation necessarily imposed, in order to reduce the debt, and pay the heavy interest accruing on that debt, have very much impoverished the people. But the crowning calamity inflicted on the people has arisen from the persistent efforts made by persons high in authority, and of great influence, by depreciation and ribaldry, to lower the character of the currency which was to the nation the legacy of the war, and further, from their having taken up at an annual expense of many millions, and put out of sight a very large proportion of that currency.

As we mean shortly to return to this very important subject of the currency, it will suffice now to say that nearly three years since, the contractionist tricks previously played with the currency led to the panic—that shock to, that prostration of public confidence, from which there has been no recovery since. There may have been causes concurring with the contraction of the currency in producing the panic, such as over-trading, over-production, excessive railway speculation, and so on. But these alone would have spent their force in all probability within three months or less, and the commercial world unembarrassed with the currency disturbance, would have moved on as if they had never been heard of.

The war, and the practices of those in authority on the national currency, being presented to the popular mind as the great and indisputable causes of the disastrous state of things that now notoriously exists in this great republic, it must be a proper question to put to the suffering people, whose government that of the Republic is said to be, what they had to say to those two most prolific sources of evil, the promotion of that war, and the tampering with the national currency.

ABSTENTION OF THE PEOPLE.

With the promotion of the civil war, it is indisputable that the people had little, if anything to do. They no doubt were slow to lend themselves to the hunting down and return of escaped slaves to their masters. The provisions of the Constitution for that purpose became literally incapable of execution. But, they indicted no Uncle Tom's Cabin, nor did they invent the doctrine of secession. Both those incitements to mischief originated with the highly cultured classes, persons of excitable temperament, and vast imaginative genius. But whoever danced, the people had to pay the piper, in havoc and destruction, in torrents of blood, in huge expenditure.

Still the question arises, would the result have been beneficially affected, had the people exercised control when the secession movement first presented itself in form. We may reasonably conclude that the people imbued with a fair portion of political knowledge, uninjected with the fanaticism of abolition on the one hand, unembarrassed by the exalted notions of the slave holder, or the mysteries of secession on the other, would take a common sense view of the matter, and speedily signify that as the provision for the return of escaped slaves was not being executed, full compensation in money should be made, and that the only road to abolition could be through full compensation, according to the precedent set by the Government from which the United States had the fatal gift of slavery, but that at all events the Union should be maintained.

A different course was adopted. The Southern people were scared with the loud talk of abolition, when no abolition was seriously meant. And then again there was held out the lure to the South of a constructive interpolation, in the Constitution, of the right of a peaceable secession of the Slave States from the Union. Thus came the war, and the innocent people have been and are now writhing under its inflictions, and thus atoning for their "innocence," or perhaps more properly speaking for their indolence, such as must have actuated the Jews when they clamored for a king, against the behests of the Almighty.

That the hands of the people are clear of guilt in relation to the war, is pretty plain; but that they had neither act or part, in bringing about the present muddle in the currency with all its attendant evils is beyond all question. The people are not in the slightest degree responsible for the collapse of prices, and the consequent shock to public

confidence ; the stagnation of business, the lamentable fact that hungry thousands raise the cry for bread, or that immigration dwindles or disappears. The non-intervention of the people on the currency question admits of a ready explanation. Individuals among the people having generally very moderate amounts on hand, trouble themselves but little about what are called the movements in the money market. The causes of these movements being altogether out of their view, they feel disposed to regard the whole thing as a mystery beyond their comprehension. They observe that many portly volumes are published on the question ; that angry controversies have long existed on the subject, with many high authorities on either side. They know that a couple of years since, Congress after lengthy debating adopted a measure which was expected to give commercial relief, and that President Grant vetoed that bill. They know that in the following session a compromise measure was enacted having for one object, what is called the resumption of cash payments, and that quite recently a bill passed the House of Representatives for the repeal of so much of the act as fixed a time for resumption. Is it a wonder then, that where there is such a conflict of authority, that the men of the people shrink from grappling with such a difficulty. As well might it be expected, where rival doctors contend for the excellency of their respective systems, by the bed side of a dying patient, that the sufferer could interpose and settle the dispute.

The difficulties of the currency question are great, yet, as the people are most interested in securing a speedy settlement of it, and as they are, not merely not "dying," but furnished with ample power to secure that settlement, we purpose, at no distant day, to lay before them such views of the matter as, we hope, with a little patient thinking, will enable them to arrive at a prompt conclusion. We may add, too, that our reason for appealing to the tribunal of the people is, that we may there expect the adjudication of common sense, secure from the imputation of any interest other than that of the welfare of the entire people.

We lay particular stress on that word "interest." Its import well deserves the people's best attention. It influences the human mind strongly for good or for evil. Very many things conduce thus to affect men's judgment.

LORD BACON'S CAREER.

Lord Bacon, described by some as the father of modern philosophy, but who undoubtedly was a man of great learning and great sagacity, warns the searchers after truth, the laborers in the acquisition of knowledge, to be on their guard against the idols of the tribe, the den, the market and the theatre, meaning, thereby, the prejudices arising from the general nature of man and his associations, the particular nature of individual man, communications or words, and lastly, false theories, false philosophies and the perverted laws of demonstration. All these are abundant sources of error, and those who seek the truth canot be too much on their guard against them. But there are two false lights which Bacon does not

expressly name, and whose illusions were too strong even for the wisdom of Bacon, which seem most proper to be brought under the attention of the people, namely, ambition and the charm of money. By these, Bacon fell. He, Lord Chancellor of England, was not only fired by the lust of power, but he actually sold justice for bribes. He was not only hurled from his pride of place by the award of his peers, but he earned from the poet the enduring description of

“The brightest, wisest, meanest of mankind.”

There is no reason for supposing that either of those formidable passions, thirst of gold and lust of power, has lost its vitality. They still, in addition to other sources of mischief, dominate among men, and it may be safely asserted, they sit enthroned in many hearts in this great Republic. These passions may be expected to develope in candidatures for high and lucrative office, for membership of Congress, Senatorships, Presidentships. There are happily thousands of unselfish, patriotic persons who are free from such influences, and whose services would be of priceless value to the public. The difficulty is to single them out from the mass of the less worthy. Let it not be supposed that we, in this design to pass any general censure on ambition, that affection of noble minds, or even on the love of gain, which is akin to prudence and thrift. But as the persons who are under the influence of these passions are liable to be carried beyond the strict line of propriety, we desire for warning's sake to note the fact.

THE JURY BOX.

For a further illustration, we refer to the experience in practical life of the careful exclusion from the jury-box of all persons whose opinions might have been formed on the case to be tried under the influences we have named, or any other. It is in this point of view that the government of the people appears in its true light and fullest advantage, as being the government of those who, from their multitude, must be necessarily unaffected by the disturbing influences of which we have spoken above, and who are for the same reason identified in interest with the entire people. If then, in the comparatively petty cases that ordinarily engage the attention of juries, it is right in order to secure an honest and just verdict to exclude persons who may be under prepossessions or undue influence, how much more necessary is it in these mighty questions that come before the people for adjudication, that the people should be on their guard against the wiles and artifices of interested parties, factions, leaders of factions, partizans; all candidates for office, high or low, are to be listened to attentively, but with a certain amount of distrust. They may propose what is just and right, or with the best possible intentions may be urging what is flagrantly erroneous. Persons of the partizan class are all plainly under the influence of prejudice and prepossessions. Candidates and their adherents are apt too, to be under the sway of those terrible influences that mastered the mighty mind of Bacon—ambition and avarice. The

professions of this class should, therefore, be received respectfully, but with caution, nay, distrust. Of course, previous and long experience of individuals will have their due weight.

THE CONSTITUTION REQUIRES HELP.

The Constitution, having, as we have shown, conferred numerous advantages on the people, not the least of which must be regarded as the probable bestowal on most able-bodied men of an addition to their lives of six years of usefulness on the average, which are now being ruthlessly abstracted from the lives of their fellow-men in Europe, and sacrificed on the altars of the war demon. It too gives to the people ample means and abundant opportunity to protect themselves and the People at large against the mismanagement and malpractices of those in power, as well as from the pitfalls of individual ambition and avarice. The vastness of the favor thus conferred can be best estimated by considering that the great bulk of the human race are now, and have been, long writhing under the hooves of despotism, or of oligarchical oppression.

But this admirable Constitution will not work of itself. It requires help; it requires care and attention. The most perfectly constructed steam-engine that ever was set on rail needs intelligent direction and control, or else it becomes a fixture, or an instrument of destruction. In truth, it seems to be an indubitable fact, that the more highly wrought, the more ingenious the contrivances of men are, the more they stand in need of skilled attention. This is the lesson taught by the experience that has been had of the great iron-clads that England has been lately sending forth in order to maintain her empire of the seas. So ruinous have been some of the accidents that have befallen them, from want of skill or care in their direction, that men have doubted whether in case of an engagement, those great ships would be more dangerous to their own people or the foe. The Constitution of the United States is no simple or commonplace document. From the difficult, and previously deemed impossible combination it effected—that of the Union with state rights, it necessarily became complex in its provisions. Its construction gave rise to the long controversy as to the right of secession, which, it would seem, is not yet ended, and as to which we may have a few words to offer:

By reason of this very matter, the English philosopher, Huxley, has been recently reported in the papers as having expressed a doubt of the continuance of the Union for another century. If Mr. Huxley happened to have as much faith in the benign Being to whom, we have shown, the founders of the Republic appealed in their Declaration of Independence, and in the formation of the Union, it is probable he would not have expressed the doubt. But the Constitution and the Union require in their workings all the assistance that the intelligence, integrity and patriotism of the people individually and in the aggregate can bestow. The measure of the required intelligence may be stated to be, the general diffusion among the people of a knowledge, the more complete the better, of the

leading features and purport of the Union and the Constitution ; also of the leading public questions of the day that affect national interests, together with, of course, all State and municipal matters of consequence.

Thus, and thus only can the men of the people give effectual aid to the working of the constitution, in the election of reliable and capable men to representative positions in Congress, or the State Legislatures, or to places on the Judicial Bench, or other places of trust or consequence, and in noticing, as far as convenient, the conduct of the selected persons in the several offices. Manifestly too much attention cannot be paid to the selection of proper persons for office, especially for the administration of justice, in which, probably, the most concerned are the humbler classes of society ; and there can be little doubt, the weaknesses by which Baconell have their influence at this side of the Atlantic as well as the other, and if such failings are allowed to have play, they give the advantage altogether to those who are rich enough to bribe.

SCALE OF ENGLISH AND ATHENIAN INTELLIGENCE.

On the subject of the intelligent and efficient exercise by the people of the great powere with which they are invested, it may be instructive to refer briefly to the career and circumstances of the renowned city of Athens. The Athenians were the most intellectual people of all antiquity. They were foremost in oratory, in philosophy and mental culture. A public writer has recently estimated that the average Athenian was as much superior to the average Englishman, as the average Englishman is superior to the average Negro. The political institutions of such a people are well worthy of notice. In Athens, the people were sovereign. Lord Lytton, (Bulwer) in his "Athens; its rise and fall," describes its government as "an unmitigated democracy." The people there exercised all sovereign powers in person. They, in full assembly, determined on all questions of peace and war. It was before that assembly that Demosthenes, the greatest of orators, delivered those famous orations called the "Philipics," and which have given since a name to the oratory that is at once vehement and convincing. The people, we repeat, heard in person those great efforts of reason and eloquence, together with the discourses of the rival orators, and decided upon their comparative worth and the great question in issue. With such training as that, we cannot wonder at the high estimate that has been formed of the Athenian intellect, or that they discovered that there was a God entitled to their worship, other than the Pagan divinities, and to whom they devoted an altar as the "Unknown God," but whom St. Paul told them was the God he preached.

ATHENS AND THE UNITED STATES.

What, then is the difference between the demoeracy of Athens and the people of the United States ? The government of the latter is undoubtedly as "unmitigated" a demoeracy as that of Athens, and also on a vastly more extensive scale. It is founded, too, on an infinitely juster principle. The demoeracy of Athens was confined to the walls of Athens. Her

dependencies and tributaries were governed from Athens, and did not participate in her democratic government. On the contrary, the United States recognizes the perfect equality of the constituent States, the least with the greatest, the newest with the oldest, and provides substantially for the self-government of even the Territories, until their population shall attain such dimensions as will entitle them respectively to be admitted as States. This great lesson in political justice the United States alone gives to the Nations.

But the people of the United States do not administer the government or dispose of the great questions of war or peace in person. No orations are addressed to them such as Philip declared, "he feared more than all the fleets and armies of the Athenians." The extent of the Republic prevents that. For that reason the people of the United States must commit the transaction of their public business to a President, a Congress, State Legislatures, &c. In order to give the world that greatest of lessons in political justice which we have described, people must deny themselves the pleasure and advantage of listening to and pronouncing upon oratory such as Demosthenes uttered.

POLITICAL SELF-EDUCATION.

This latter is a disadvantage, but it is more than countervailed by that consciousness with which each American heart ought to be impressed, that whilst their glorious Republic gives to its own people the opportunity of realizing all the happiness that can be known on earth, it is working relief, directly and indirectly, even to the downtrodden among the nations, and pronouncing words of warning to their tyrants. This consciousness, and their own intelligence, together with the care for their own interests, should prompt the people of the United States to devote a certain portion of their time, like to that which the Athenians gave to the hearing of Demosthenes and the other orators, to the acquisition of so much political knowledge as will enable them to discharge the duty of citizens in selecting fit men for office, and noting their conduct while in office. As to this self education of the people, here suggested, it might suffice to say, that it in the main, must be, not only the work of the people themselves, but also one continued from day to day. Politics necessarily relate to the events of the present time, and these are principally to be dealt with. The education of a citizen cannot, therefore, be given in schools and colleges, though some of the elements may.

As the groundwork of his political education, the citizen should make himself acquainted with the outlines, general purport, and effect of the Constitution, and as much of the history of the country and its institutions as he conveniently can. Next after the knowledge of his religion, and that belonging to his occupation in life, we can confidently assert, the most profitable information he can acquire, will be that which will enable him to discharge his duty, independantly and efficiently, as a loyal citizen of the Republic. The first step to the acquisition by the citizen, of a com-

petent portion of political knowledge, is to feel and be thoroughly conscious of the want of it. When once the citizen has attained the consciousness of the dignity, amongst the sons of men of his position as a citizen of the United States, together with its responsibilities, and great opportunities, half his work will be done; knowledge will stream in on all sides. He should also favor the diffusion amongst the people of the much needed sound political information.

The indefinite extension of this admirable system must necessarily be a mighty boon to humanity so frequently scourged by wars and their dread concomitants, devastation, famine and slaughter. But how is this blessed extension to be secured? Simply by the self-government of the several States being sacredly preserved and securely guarded by the vigilant outlook and abundant powers of the central Government.

POLITICAL JUSTICE.

The extension of the United States since the adoption of the Constitution has been marvelous. There has not been such a growth of population, of States, of productive power combined with the largest measure of individual liberty, in the history of the world. A hundred years ago, Mr. Bancroft informs us, the population, of the thirteen original States, white and colored, was just two millions, six hundred thousand; it is now over forty millions. What is the explanation of the miracle? It is, that not only did the original two millions and a half increase and multiply, but men were drawn hither from other lands, attracted as well by the generous welcome to participate in the boundless resources of the country, accorded to foreigners, as charmed by the system of political justice that held sway here. The further explanation is, that of the thirty-seven or thirty-eight States of the Union, old and new, large and small, all under the Constitution were treated alike, and each guaranteed a republican form of self-government.

MILITARISM MINIMISED AND MAN'S LIFE ENLARGED.

Immigrants too, from European Countries, must be struck with the absence from American Cities of a class with which their eyes at least had been very familiar at home, namely, the military class—a class, with which few escaped being more intimately acquainted either personally, or through near relations. The immigrants should know too, that the contrast alluded to guarantees to the able-bodied man in America for profitable employment, at least half a dozen years of the best part of his life, which should be spent elsewhere, either in learning to bear arms, in bearing arms, or in being prepared to answer the call to bear arms. The explanation is, that whilst the European Nations, with scarcely an exception, are organized for war, the Federal Union of America, is specifically an organization for peace. True, the terrible conscription is confined to Continental Europe; as yet it only impends over England.

We leave our readers to determine whether to the predilection for peace inculcated by the Federal Institutions of the Country, or the elevating ennobling influence of Republican freedom, the world is indebted for the grandest example of generosity and magnanimity, of which any age or nation gives record, that with which the late calamitous civil war was ended, and it seems hoped to be forgotten. Never had there been to the demon of war, within a like period so huge a sacrifice of blood and treasure. Yet at the end, where was the "*Va Victis?*" (woe to the vanquished) the *executions*, the dungeons, the confiscations with which all civil wars had been previously ended? Yes, where were they? Why, not even Jefferson Davis was prosecuted. How grandly does the instantaneous amnesty, accorded by free America, contrast with the refusal by proud and pretentious England to set free from her dungeons the ten years incarcerated Fenians.

Such is the all important explanation of the wondrous growth of the United States; and it is also valuable in refuting an erroneous opinion that has been held for thousands of years. It was that republican institutions were incompatible with extended dominion; that Republicanism should be confined to, say, a single city, as Athens or Rome—Rome was all conquering, and by a fine political instinct conceded to her conquests, under her protection and for her profit a certain amount of self-government. Thus we see in Judea, Herod figuring as a king, but under the control of the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate. But within the dominions of Rome, Republicanism was confined to Rome.

In the United States Republican Freedom is not confined to the seat of Empire, but is diffused with perfect impartiality, through her wide limits, in the only way it could with security be diffused, by confiding the matter under the constitution to the hearts and hands of the people of the several States. So the mighty paradox is solved, that whereas it was heretofore universally believed that the blessings of Republican Government should necessarily be confined to narrow limits, it has now been demonstrated beyond question, that under the system devised by the framers of the Constitution, one paramount Republic with its constituent Republics may be made to embrace Continents. In fact, the American Republic in its present state affords conclusive evidence that it of all earthly governments can hold, by the surest means, namely, willing subjection, the widest of territories, and the vastest population. It was then no mere flight of fancy for the enthusiastic Frenchmen to propose the erection at New York of the Centennial Monument, symbolising American liberty giving light to the nations—that American liberty to which their own glorious ancestors contributed so much, to give a vigorous existence.

The Legal title of the people under the Constitution to control the government of the United States being indisputable, and that government having been on the whole a great success, it must be interesting as well as profitable to consider why so excellent a form of government is

so much of a novelty. The great mass of mankind has ever preferred kingly rule. Republics have been comparatively few, and those of an aristocratical, oligarchical character. This Republic towers above all other Republics, ancient or modern, not only in extent of territory, and in magnitude of population, but also in giving full play to the democratic principle, that is, in the powers of government being placed under the control of the people. The preference even of the "chosen" people of the Jews for kingly rule is shown under the most remarkable circumstances in the Old Testament.

THE JEWS AND KINGLY RULE.

The nation of the Jews had after the death of Moses been ruled by wise and discreet men called Judges, of whom Samuel was the last. He was old and appointed his sons to be judges; but they abused their authority, "took bribes and perverted justice." Then the ancients of Israel being assembled, came to Samuel and said to him: "Thou art old, thy sons walk not in thy ways. Make us a king to judge us, as all nations have." This was displeasing to Samuel, and he prayed to the Lord. And the Lord said to Samuel: "Hearken to the people in all that they say to thee, for they have not rejected thee, but Me, that I should not reign over them." "But yet testify and tell them of the right of the king that shall reign over them." Then Samuel told them the words of the Lord, and enumerated very fully the inflictions they should endure from their king, namely, "He will take your sons and make them his horsemen, and running footmen to run before his chariots, and his tribunes and centurions, and to plough his fields, and reap his corn, and make him arms and chariots; and your daughters he will take to be his cooks and bakers. After many more specifications, all which can be seen in 1 Kings, chap. 8, it concludes, "Your flocks also he will tithe, and you shall be his servants." They were further warned that "they would cry out from the face of the king, but the Lord will not hear you in that day, because you desired unto yourselves a king." Notwithstanding, however, those terrible cautions, the people said, "Nay, but there shall be a king over us. We also will be like all nations; our king shall judge us, and shall go out before us and fight our battles for us. And Samuel after again consulting the Lord, was told to hearken to the people's voice, and make them a king. This he did by selecting Saul, who is described as a goodly man, appearing from his shoulders and upward above all the people.

On the whole, it is not difficult to understand why the Jews wanted a king. They wanted some one to fight their battles, and do their thinking for them, and so far as possible, relieve them of all responsibility. It may be a question, whether the same disposition to shirk difficulties and place them on kingly shoulders has not ever since largely actuated peoples, and brought many of them to ruin. It is a received maxim, "that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." It may plainly be added that it is also the price of good and prudent government, and even of material prosperity.

Independent thinking in politics is much to be desired. Lord Bacon, and indeed all who have written seriously on the subject, have warned all searchers after truth against the fallacies of the tribe, the market, the theatre; that is, the sect, the party, the faction. The right of private judgment in politics is the law of this republic, and should be the practice of every citizen. Otherwise, multitudes of citizens will be found influenced by cliques and parties, and acting against their own and the public interests. "Party has been defined to be the madness of many for the gain of a few." The definition may be well relied on as correct, where the many choose to be the slaves of party. But if the many be individually instructed and self-dependent, they can make party an instrument of usefulness.

An institution enjoyed by Americans, and which the Athenians, if they had it, would have much relished, as St. Paul says, they were fond of hearing new things, is the newspaper. This publication is generally furnished with matter for all sorts of readers—matter merely trifling, amusing or sensational, as well as information as to public affairs. The citizen anxious to do his duty under the Constitution, will, of course, confine his attention to practical matters, and avoid merely "kill time reading." He will pay but little attention to the idle and barren speculations of the so-called "scientists" of the Huxley and Darwin school, on forsooth, "Evolution, the age of the world, and the origin of the species," matters just as much beyond our knowledge as our influence. The utility of such inquiries is about on a par with that of the machine invented by the philosopher, told of by Dean Swift, for "extracting sunbeams from cucumbers."

Another institution, quite of the present day, that has been found beneficial in diffusing information among the people, though in a comparatively trivial matter, is the "Spelling Bee." Its successful and pleasant working may suggest to patriotic citizens a convenient mode of imbuing the public mind with the spirit and principles of the Constitution, and enable them to form some estimate of the vast advantages that may be expected to arise from giving that Constitution full and fair play. If people can derive advantage from the workings of the Spelling Bee, how much more might they expect benefit from gatherings that would improve their acquaintance with the law and the Constitution.

BULGARIAN HORRORS IN ENGLAND.

We have now, however feebly and inadequately, whilst noting the beneficent working of the constitution and the exalted position assigned by it to the masses of the population, endeavoured to impress on the popular mind, that certain miscarriages that have taken place in the affairs of the republic, occasioning much suffering to the people, might have been averted had the people paid more attention to, and striven more to make themselves acquainted with public affairs, and made due exercise of the powers with which they are invested. On this subject, a

lesson is offered by what is passing in England at this moment. In oligarchical England, the voice of public opinion is being vigorously raised in condemnation of the connivance of the government of the crafty Disraeli at the atrocities of the Turks in Bulgaria, those atrocities, which in all probability would have been buried in oblivion but for the active intervention of the American minister, who, without consulting Disraeli gave them to the world. Those atrocities, we say, now reprobated in England, were quite of the class of diabolisms perpetrated in Ireland by Cromwell, and which have been much approved of by the English Historians, Carlyle and Fronde. Again like atrocities were perpetrated by Warren Hastings in establishing English authority in India. Again in suppressing the Indian mutiny, it was deemed right to blow men into fragments, from the cannon mouth. Remembering these things, it is well to hear that the English people are now indulging in some virtuous indignation at Turkish enormities.

Whatever may be the result, it is satisfactory to have the popular eye in England turned on the conduct of Statesmen, and the popular estimate given of the average Statecraft. It is a warning, if it were necessary, to the American people to place by no means boundless confidence in their governmental authorities, and that their attention to and intervention in public affairs can scarcely fail to be beneficial. To aid them in coming to a satisfactory conclusion we submit to them the following reflections:

REFLECTIONS.

The first is, whether they, the people North and South, are not and have not been for a considerable time, enduring very great calamities distinctly traceable to two notable events, viz: The civil war and the trouble in the currency?

The second is: whether, with the fomenting or promotion of either of those stupendous mischiefs, they, the people, had anything directly to do; whether the mischiefs have not been the work of the cultured, the refined, the highly educated classes; the statesmen, the financiers, the orators, and, we may add, the philosophers and the political economists. And conceding that those classes and individuals acted with the best possible intentions, and have suffered, many of them, from the causes above indicated, whether it can for a moment be pretended that their sufferings have been of the unmixed character of those with which the general mass of the population have been afflicted.

Many of them, in the general scramble, have acquired wealth and power, position and place. Few of them have been reduced to abject poverty, whilst we see that stalwart men of the people have been in many cases obliged to parade the streets in order to procure bread for themselves and their starving families.

The third consideration is, whether they the people, have not the constitutional right, by their votes at elections, to control the governments of the Union, and of the several States, and supposing that they did

exercise their right with respect to the civil war, and with respect to the currency, it is possible the consequences of their intervention could have been worse thrn those of their having permitted matters to have proceeded in the calamitous course now so much lamented ?

Fourth, whether, when the people are doing well, any considerable section of the community can be suffering ? In other words, whether the well being of the mass of the people be not conclusive evidence that the nation is in a sound state.

Fifth, whether it is not highly probable, that it would be much better for all parties, except perhaps certain fortunate individuals who succeeded in carrying off the prizes of life, if the common sense of the people had made itself felt, and their material interests more regarded in, those critical movements that led, and were pretty sure to lead to civil war ; and also in the dealings that have now, with such disastrous consequence, been going on for so many years with the National Currency ?

Sixth, whether it is not the plain interest as well as the right of the people to take the path of duty, and prepare to fulfil the part assigned to them in the Republic and its government by the Constitution ; and when hundreds of thousands of the people would promptly re-echo the glorious cry of " Liberty or Death," and readily lay down their lives in the battle-field for the safety of the Republic, they ought not to be anxious to expend a few hours from time to time in the acquisition of such sound political knowledge as would save them from being made the dupes of party or of faction, and in fact the instruments of their own undoing, and also add enormously to their moral and material amendment ?

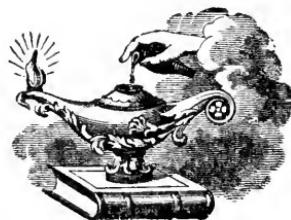
Seventh, whether the people, or even individuals of the people, thus advancing their own and the Nation's interest, might not reasonably expect thereby to raise the standard of political knowledge amongst all classes of the community, and so to impress on the leaders of party the necessity of selecting for public approval candidates of higher qualifications than have been hitherto deemed requisite ; also whether the Frenchman's symbolical idea at New York of America, enlightening the nations, would not thus be realized, and by the force of a brilliant example, the cause of the Republic advanced in bloodless fields ; and finally, whether the grand ideal of the Roman poet of the Augustan age, as expressed in Dryden's vigorous lines, might not in progress of time be reached, and by moral means alone ?

After in Hades, the future heroes of Rome were made to pass in review, the glorious career of the Republic was thus indicated :

" Let others better mold the mass
Of metal, and inform the breathing brass,
And soften into flesh a marble face,
Plead better at the bar, describe the skies,
And when the stars descend, and when they rise ;
But Rome, 'tis thine, with awful sway,
To rule mankind, and make the world obey.
Disposing peace and war, thine own majestic way ;

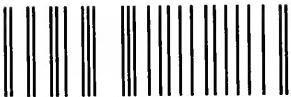
To tame the proud, the fettered slave to free,
These are imperial arts, and worthy thee."

As an incitement to earnest thinking on the foregoing, we venture to refresh the popular memory with a brief summary of the results of the late civil war. The figures were agreed on by Horace Greely and Alexander Stephens, both Historians of that war from opposite sides. The expenditure in human life was one million of men that either died in battle, or from wounds and diseases incurred in the progress of the war. And eight thousand millions were expended in cash, or lost in devastation and waste of property.





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